

THE STATE OF HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY IN WISCONSIN

ANNUAL REPORT – DECEMBER 2001

**PREPARED BY THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
SERVICES IN COOPERATION WITH THE WISCONSIN FOOD SECURITY
CONSORTIUM**

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OVERVIEW

Pursuant to Wisconsin State Statute 46.76, the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) is required to develop an annual plan that documents the issue of hunger, populations experiencing hunger within this state and recommend strategies for state and federal policy changes to address hunger. The material and subsequent attachments submitted within this report serves to meet the requirement laid out in s.46.76.

Throughout 2001, the Wisconsin Food Security Consortium, through a contract with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP), has been focusing its efforts on analyzing existing data relating to hunger and making recommendations for additional research and analysis. As part of this effort, in July 2001, the Food Security Consortium released the inaugural "Status Report on Hunger in Wisconsin." This report card (appendix A) assesses the extent of hunger and food insecurity in Wisconsin along with the use of key federal and community resources to prevent hunger in our communities. The report card serves as the basis for meeting the requirements in s.46.76.

In addition, this year's report focuses on the specific outcomes within each program area. For a more specific description on the programs, please refer to the 2000 Annual Report on Hunger and Food Security on the Department of Health and Family Services website at

<http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/children/hunger/2000FSCReport1227-final.pdf>

There are a number of factors that must be considered when looking at the face of hunger and food insecurity today compared to one year ago. The economy is not as vibrant as we experienced in the late 1990s and the devastating events of September 11, 2001 added an additional blow to the economic picture of the country. At the same time, many agencies serving low-income individuals are experiencing a decrease in charitable giving both from private foundations and citizens. The market for charitable giving has become very competitive and almost non-existent for any causes outside of emergency disaster relief in New York and Washington, DC.

The Labor Market Indicator (LMI) website established by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development is considered the principle repository for Bureau of Labor Statistics federal/state statistics concerning Wisconsin's labor economy. The LMI has identified a number of coinciding indicators that determine the current pulse of the economy. One significant indicator is the unemployment rate. In Wisconsin, unemployment has risen since the fall of 1999, when it reached a low of 2.9 percent. It climbed to more than 4 percent

early this year and currently resides at 3.9 percent as of October 2001.¹ The national unemployment rate has climbed to 5 percent. It has not been at 5 percent since March 1998.²

LMI has also identified a number of leading indicators that forecast where the economy might be headed, as they change pace before shifts in the economy as a whole. The number of people who file an initial claim for unemployment compensation (U.C.) is a very reliable indicator of economic trends in the near future. Well over 90 percent of Wisconsin's wage and salary jobs are covered by U.C. The initial claims for U.C. for 2001 year to date is 643,040, a 37.6 percent increase from 2000 year to date claims (467,263).³

Economic factors, along with personal circumstances, play a role in the cause of hunger and food insecurity. Often times, when the economy weakens, there is an increase in the number of people seeking emergency food assistance from various sources, including soup kitchens, food pantries and shelters. Even during strong economic times and low unemployment rates, many families are still at risk of not getting adequate nutritious meals. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Insecurity Prevalence Study conducted by the Census Bureau concluded that 7.2 percent of all Wisconsin households from 1996 to 1998 were food insecure. The national average is 9.7 percent. Households determined to be food insecure expressed concerns about not having sufficient food, had to reduce the nutritional quality or size of their meals, were forced to skip meals or experienced hunger.

As we continue to look at how hunger and food insecurity impacts our state, through our program efforts and research activities we will continue to document unmet need as well. In future reports, we will look to identify those areas where there are gaps and recommend strategies for meeting the need.

¹ "Capitol Comments." November/December 2001. Jon Peacock, Wisconsin Budget Project Director, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families.

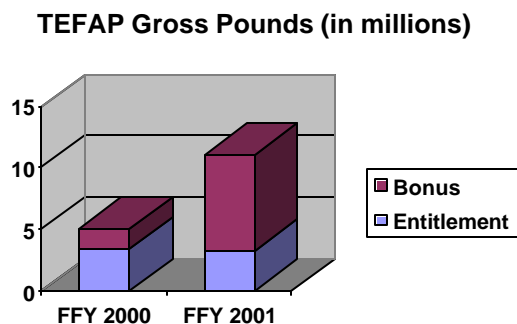
² "Workforce Observations for Southeast Wisconsin Counties." November 2001. Eric Grosso, State Labor Market Economist.

³ "Unemployment Insurance Claims Filed, November 25 through December 01, 2001." Department of Workforce Development.

THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that distributes commodities to low-income people through participating food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers TEFAP on the federal level and the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) administers it in Wisconsin.

- In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2001, Wisconsin's TEFAP network distributed over 11.1 million gross pounds of nutritious meats, produce, fruits, grains, cereals and other food valued at over 6.4 million dollars. This included 3.3 million gross pounds of entitlement food and 7.8 million gross pounds of bonus food. In FFY 2000, Wisconsin distributed 4.3 million gross pounds of food; 3.4 million entitlement and 1.6 million bonus product.



- In FFY 2001, approximately 185 food pantries provided emergency food through TEFAP to 364,433 families (duplicated count). Approximately 40 soup kitchens and 30 shelters served 1,579,117 meals to low-income people (duplicated count).
- FFY 2001 saw unprecedented quantities of bonus food made available to Wisconsin with no federal dollars to cover the storage and transportation of the food. DHFS, in conjunction with the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee (HTFM) raised enough resources from private and public sources to deliver the surplus of bonus product.

WISCONSIN FOOD PANTRY ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Governor Scott McCallum directed the Secretary of DHFS to distribute the Food Pantry Grants authorized in 2001 Wisconsin Act 16, in the amount of \$750,000. These grants are available on a one-time-only basis (July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002) to Wisconsin's existing emergency food programs that meet state and federal standards. \$50,000 of the total was allocated to DHFS to assist in the costs of storing and transporting emergency food offered to Wisconsin through TEFAP.

DHFS identified local TEFAP Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs) as the recipients of these grant funds. The criteria for utilization of these funds are specifically designated to help pantries improve their services and meet the standards as set forth under TEFAP:

- Build infrastructure of food pantry network in agency's service area;
- Improve/enhance the current pantry network;
- Increase/improve storage and distribution systems;
- Transportation costs for food transferred between pantries in an agency's service area;
- Conduct nutrition and outreach services;
- Enhance food security efforts;
- Develop/enhance Hunger Councils;
- Improve pantry administration to enhance referral/connectivity to other services;
- Enhance quality assurance and food safety efforts;
- Technical assistance related to food pantry management;
- Implement/enhance client choice system of distribution;
- Work with neighboring food pantries and other related organizations to ensure there are no gaps in or duplication of service within the agency's service area;
- Increase the number of days a pantry is open;
- Increase the number of pantries in an agency's service area as needed; and
- Implement/expand service to soup kitchens and shelters in agency's service area.

All EFOs receiving these grant funds were required to submit a plan to the Administrator of the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for approval (see Appendix B for listing of approved projects).

FOOD PANTRIES

The Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee (HTFM) surveyed approximately 490 food pantries⁴ throughout Wisconsin from September through December 2001.⁵ Lists of pantries were acquired from the Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP), Second Harvest Food Banks serving Wisconsin and HTFM.

Of those surveyed, 290 pantries from 65 counties responded to the survey (counties with no reporting pantries were Bayfield, Door, Marinette, Marquette, Menomonie, Outagamie and Waushara). The returned surveys yielded the following results⁶:

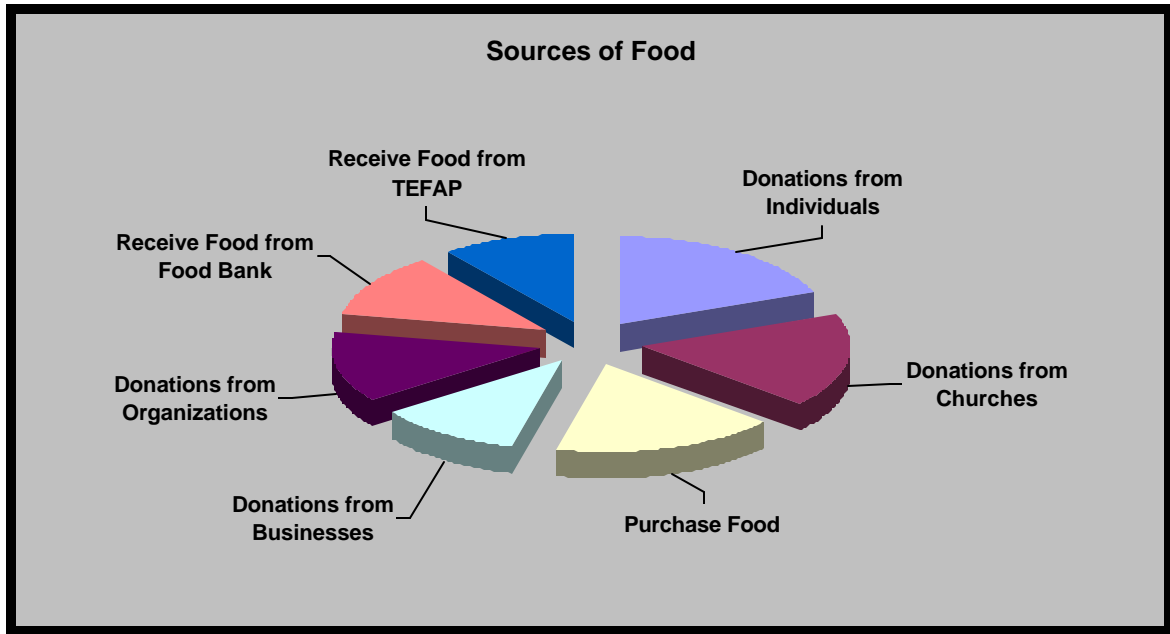
- On average, pantries reported serving 130 households (n=267) and 346 total individuals per month (n=262). The median number of households served monthly is 192 and the median number of total individuals served is 74.
- Pantries were asked if they noticed changes in the number of clients requesting emergency food in the past year of being surveyed (September – December 2001). Out of all pantries returning surveys, 77.6% of pantries reported that they noticed increases in the number of clients served within the past year of being surveyed; 8.6% reported they noticed decreases in requests.
- Pantries were asked whether or not they have any paid staff. Out of all pantries returning surveys, 73.4% have no paid staff, 25.5% have paid staff at the pantry and 1% did not answer.
- Pantries were asked whether they were short of certain types of foods at the time they were surveyed (September – December 2001). Overall, 77.2% of pantries reported that they were in short supply of at least one type of food. The most common types of food that pantries were short of were lunch/dinner meats (49.7%), dairy products (42.1%) and breakfast foods (34.8%).

⁴ Based on lists of food pantries gathered by Second Harvest, WISCAP, HTFM and County Social Service Agencies, HTFM has compiled a database of 567 organizations in Wisconsin that identify as food pantries. It is very likely that several hundred other organizations distribute food to individuals in some capacity but would not identify as an "open-to-the-public" food pantry.

⁵ The number is approximate because HTFM could not verify the accuracy of the food pantry lists they received.

⁶ The results of this study are preliminary. A full report from HTFM will be available in spring 2002.

- Pantries were asked about their sources of food. Out of all pantries returning surveys, 91% receive donations from individuals, 85.5% receive donations from churches, 84.8% purchase food, 53.8% receive donations from local businesses, 63.4% receive donations from other local organizations, 56.6% receive food from a regional food bank and 50% receive food from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).



- The total number of food pantries operating in Milwaukee County is estimated to be 303⁷. Of these, approximately 25%, or 77 pantries, are affiliated with HTFM. Among these pantries, there was a 43.7% increase in the number of people served between the period 1995 to 2001.

⁷ “Building Community to End Hunger. A Blueprint for the Future of Food Security in Milwaukee.” The Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition. 2001.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in more than 94,000 public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions nationwide. NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches for more than 25 million children each school day. The National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946, created the lunch program. The program is administered by the Department of Public Instruction in Wisconsin. In 2001, approximately 544,216 children participated in school lunch totaling approximately 89 million meals, compared to 536,099 (approximately 86 million meals) in 2000.⁸

Approximately 6.3 million children in more than 65,000 schools across the country begin their day with breakfast through the School Breakfast Program. School Breakfast is a federal program that provides States with cash assistance to provide breakfast in schools and residential child care institutions. The program operates under the same administration and eligibility criteria as the School Lunch Program. In 2001, Wisconsin had 58,888 children participate in the school breakfast program totaling approximately 10 million meals, compared to 56,313 children (approximately 9.6 million) in 2000.⁹

- A change in the annual state appropriation from \$150,000 for breakfast startup grants to an annual appropriation of \$892,000 in 2000-2001 now provides ten-cent reimbursement per breakfast served. The legislature increased the appropriation for school breakfast to \$1,055,400 for 2001-2003. This increase was a result of collaborative efforts of many organizations, specifically the Wisconsin School Food Service Association and Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee.
- Wisconsin Senator Herb Kohl's Breakfast Bill provided \$500,000 to expand school breakfast programs in Wisconsin. Grant awards were made to 56 school food authorities to implement a breakfast program in 104 schools with total enrollment of 44,840. It is anticipated that 8,000 children will receive breakfast at the new breakfast sites.
- Wisconsin was recognized for improvement in the Food Research and Action Center's (FRAC) annual breakfast report as a state with a marked increase in school breakfast program participation. Although still last among the states in terms of the percentage of schools offering breakfast and the percentage of students eating breakfast, Wisconsin had the eighth largest percentage increase in the number of schools offering breakfast, and the thirty-first

⁸ USDA Food and Nutrition Service Program Data, www.fns.usda.gov/pd/cnpmain.htm, State Level Tables FY 1997-2001. October 2001 data is preliminary.

⁹ Ibid.

largest percentage increase in low-income student participation. Of the 442 school buildings with 40 percent or more of the children eligible for free and reduced price meals, 90 percent are in the school breakfast program.

- Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, with the help of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee recently conducted a random survey¹⁰ of 2,000 public school teachers in Wisconsin to assess their attitudes and perceptions of school breakfast programs. In schools with breakfast programs, the top reasons identified as barriers that limit participation rates were “busing,” “students have no time,” “student food preferences” and “stigma.” In schools without breakfast programs, the top barriers that prevent schools from providing breakfast programs were “unaware/uninformed of the program,” “too costly/revenue issue” and “busing issues.” Teachers in schools with and without breakfast programs said large numbers of students do not eat breakfast at home. Also, 64.5% of teachers from schools with breakfast programs said they have seen children complain of headaches and stomachaches this school year and half of those teachers said they think those complaints are related to hunger. Moreover, 58.7% of teachers from schools without breakfast programs said they have seen children complain of headaches and stomachaches this school year and almost two-thirds of those teachers said they think those complaints are related to hunger.

Section 1741s of the 1987 Wisconsin Act 27 created s. 115.343, the Wisconsin Morning Milk Program. It was later amended by 1991 Wisconsin Act 39 and 2001 Wisconsin Act 16. The program provides free milk to children in public and private schools, grades pre-kindergarten through five, who meet the National School Lunch Program guidelines for free or reduced-price lunch. It is a state-authorized, state-funded program.

- There has been an increase in state funding for the Wisconsin School Day Milk Program (formerly the Wisconsin Morning Milk Program) from \$429,300 in 1998-1999 to \$671,400 in 1999-2000 and to \$710,600 in 2000-2001, avoiding the need to prorate school claims.

¹⁰ All of the survey figures are preliminary. The final figures weren't available at the date of this publication.

COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS

In accordance with USDA regulations, the Community Nutrition Team in the Department of Public Instruction operates the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Summer Food Service Program and the Special Milk Program in Non-School Settings.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides reimbursement to participating day care operators for their meal costs to children and adults in day care. The Program operates in regulated child care centers, outside-school-hours care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters and some adult day care centers.

- In FY2001, the average daily attendance in CACFP was 57,266 totaling approximately 32 million meals, compared with 57,534 children (approximately 31.7 million meals) in FY2000.¹¹

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides free meals to low-income children during school vacations. The summer program offers low-income children nutritious food when school is not in session. Nationally, the SFSP served 2.1 million children a day at more than 31,300 sites across the country during the summer of 2001. In summer 2001 Wisconsin served in excess of 1 million meals.¹²

The Special Milk Program (SMP) provides milk to children in schools, child care institutions, and summer camps that do not participate in other Federal child nutrition meal service programs. The program reimburses providers for the milk they serve. Schools in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs also may participate in the SMP to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs. The Special Milk Program started in 1955 is administered at the Federal level by the USDA through its Food and Consumer Service (FCS).

- In 2001, Wisconsin served 10,189,139 half pints of milk through the special milk program.¹³

¹¹ USDA Food and Nutrition Service Program Data, www.fns.usda.gov/pd/cnpmain.htm, State Level Tables FY 1997-2001. October 2001 data is preliminary.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

The State of Wisconsin's Food Stamp program is supervised by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and administered by 72 county and 7 tribal human service agencies throughout the State. Food Stamp applications are accepted at all Job Centers, W-2 agencies (Wisconsin's Welfare to Work Program) and the local Social/Human Service Agencies. Food Stamp benefits are distributed through the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system at certified grocery and other food stores.

- As of December 2001, participation in the Food Stamp program has grown to 101,919 households (252,332 persons). Monthly benefit amounts totaled nearly \$16 million in December. This is the largest number of participants since early 1996.
- Wisconsin's Food Stamp caseload growth over the past year has been the sixth largest in the nation – an increase of 21% from December 2000 – December 2001.
- Wisconsin has taken an active role in advocating for federal FS policy simplification by creating a Department of Administration (DOA)/DWD Food Stamp Federal Policy workgroup. This workgroup, made up of private and public stakeholders, provided FS policy recommendations to the Governor, American Public Human Services Association (APSHA), WI State Congressional delegation, and the Federal Government.
- DWD has participated in the APHSA Food Stamp Modernization Committee to make recommendations to the federal government for overhauling the program via Reauthorization of the FS Act by Congress in 2002 as part of the farm bill negotiations.
- DWD is participating on a Waiver Improvement Team of state and federal staff put together by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. The Team has made recommendations to the federal agency on streamlining the process of requesting and obtaining approval for waivers to federal FS laws.
- DWD has worked with local agencies and organizations to research the feasibility of obtaining federal waivers and demonstration projects to simplify Wisconsin's program under existing federal laws and regulations, including:
 - 1.** Simplifying the reporting requirements for persons who are employed (waiver is currently in place); and
 - 2.** Waivers for simplified reporting and improved income deductions for child support income and utility expenses (waivers are currently under consideration by the federal government).

- In collaboration with the Department of Health and Family Services, DWD has expanded access for program applications by promoting out-stationing of eligibility workers at non-traditional locations, such as hospitals, clinics, community centers, etc.
- DWD and Milwaukee County are developing a change-reporting center (access 24 hours a day/7 days a week) that will make it easier for customers to report changes in household circumstances by telephone – phased in implementation began in November 2001.
- DWD developed a Food Stamp Data Warehouse to provide easy access to statewide program data and analysis, which will be implemented in late 2001 and early 2002.
- The federal government, under an established formula, assesses a penalty for states whose error rates exceed the national average. States are penalized for errors in excess of \$25 per case, whether caused by the state or local agency, or by the recipients, (which now accounts for the majority of Wisconsin's "errors"). Wisconsin was assessed a \$1.6 million penalty for FFY 2000. By an agreement and approved plan with the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, DWD is able to reinvest these funds in lieu of reimbursing the federal government, in efforts to increase benefit accuracy. In FFY 2001, Wisconsin spent \$1,281,988 on reinvestment activities such as a statewide food stamp training conference, a change reporting center for clients in Milwaukee County, various food stamp outreach activities, training for local agencies, and statewide technical assistance with local agencies related to improving the state's payment accuracy rate. The current quality control system has been the primary means used by the federal government for many years to measure states' administration of the FS program. Wisconsin, along with other states, have had ongoing discussions with the USDA to reform the current system, resulting in joint agreement to achieve a more balanced system for measuring program outcomes, such as customer service, program access and participation, outreach, etc. Various alternatives have been proposed in development of Reauthorization of the Food Stamp Act, including the Farm Bill.

WISCONSIN ELDERLY NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Wisconsin Elderly Nutrition Program has provided meals and other nutrition services in every county of the state for 27 years. Elderly persons are provided meals either delivered to their homes or served in senior centers or other community settings. Meals served offer at least 33 percent of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for an older person. The Programs also offer referrals to other services, nutrition screening, nutrition education, and nutrition assessment and counseling services.

Elderly Nutrition Program services are available to anyone 60 years or older and their spouse (regardless of age). Provider agencies target services to seniors with the greatest nutritional, social and economic need. Participants are asked to donate what they can afford to pay toward the cost of service. However, no one is denied meals or nutrition services because of inability to contribute.

Federal and state funds granted to Wisconsin's Elderly Nutrition Programs in 2001 totaled \$15.5 million. The state's General Purpose Revenue (GPR) contribution accounted for 41 percent of the funds. In addition to the federal and state grants, local program budgets may be supplemented with other sources including voluntary participant donations (up to 33 percent of local program funds), USDA meal reimbursement (59 cents per meal), and/or local county funding.

In 2001, the program served an estimated 5,396,000 total meals: 2,696,000 meals to homebound seniors and 2,700,000 meals to seniors in 610 community sites across Wisconsin.

Programs continue to experience a dramatic shift in the demand for meal services. Ten years ago 80 percent of the meals were served to groups of elderly at senior centers and other community sites. Today, only 50 percent of meals are served in a congregate setting. The demand for meals, which are delivered to the homes of those too frail or ill to leave their home for a meal, has greatly increased. Many factors contribute to the greater need for home-delivered meals, including an increase in the number of community-dwelling elderly and shorter hospital stays.

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program serves low to moderate income pregnant and breastfeeding women, new mothers, infants and children under the age five, that are at nutritional risk. For the past three years, the WIC Program has had a stable participation level at an average of 99,000 statewide. Participation increased to approximately 102,000 as of November 2001.

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provides nutrition education and vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables to be used at authorized farmers' markets. 41 counties are served by FMNP through the local WIC projects. This is an increase from 20 counties in the 2000 season. 57,237 families were served in the 2001 market season. Each family received \$20 in vouchers per season. Continued funding levels for the FMNP are uncertain and are dependent on WIC funding and participation levels.

In January 2001, the Wisconsin WIC Association and the Wisconsin WIC Program collaborated to conduct a food insecurity survey sampling over 1,800 families in 16 local WIC projects. The survey questions used had been tested nationally and are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The results of the WIC survey showed that 44% of the families were food insecure and 20% were food insecure with hunger. Food insecurity and hunger have been identified as national and state priorities, as well as a priority of the Wisconsin WIC Association. The State WIC Program and the WWA will again collaborate to conduct a statewide food insecurity survey through all WIC projects.

SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PILOT PROGRAM (SFMNPP)

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Pilot Program was conducted in Wisconsin for the first time in 2001. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, in cooperation with the Division of Public Health WIC Program, administered the pilot program. In its first season, vouchers were distributed to 4,200 individuals in 11 counties. Each person received \$100 in vouchers per season to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at authorized farmers' markets. Continued funding for SFMNPP is uncertain.

TURNING POINT INITIATIVE

During 2001, the Turning Point Transformation Team completed "Healthiest Wisconsin 2010: A Partnership Plan to Improve the Health of the Public." The Plan identified two Health Status Priorities that relate to nutrition: 1) Overweight, Obesity and Lack of Physical Activity; and 2) Adequate and Appropriate Nutrition. The Turning Point Implementation Teams took the priorities identified in "Healthiest Wisconsin 2010" and developed goals and objectives to address the priorities. The "Adequate and Appropriate Nutrition," priority has three broad concepts/objectives, one of which relates specifically to food security. The objective states, "By 2010, increase the number of Wisconsin households that have access to adequate, safe and appropriate food at all times." It includes several activities that address food insecurity and food handling practices in non-regulated settings. The Implementation Team will release its plan in 2002.

FOOD BUYING COOPERATIVES

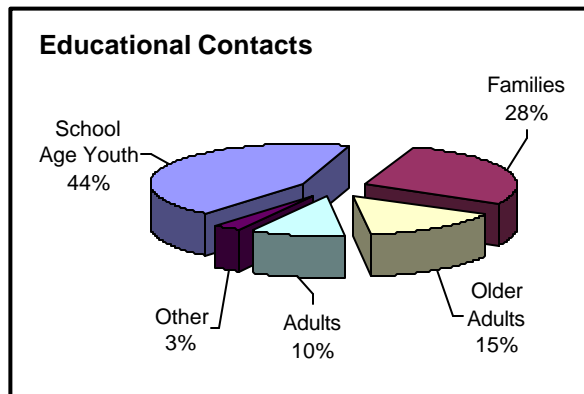
When groups coordinate common purchases they can get a significant discount over the amount of retail purchases. "Food buying clubs or cooperatives" range in size from informal groups ordering specialized foods to large national non-profits like The Self Help and Resource Exchange (SHARE), that are capable of leveraging the purchasing power of hundreds of thousands of members.

SHARE is the largest of the non-profit food buying clubs in the United States and serves participants in 58 Wisconsin counties. SHARE builds and strengthens the community by helping households save money on food and by encouraging and promoting volunteer service. SHARE has no income guidelines for participation; however, participants tend to be in the lower income brackets. In a phone survey of SHARE participants, 46% of respondents reported income of \$20,000 or less annually. Another 37% reported annual income of between \$20,000 - \$35,000. 52% live in households with 3-5 people. Of the people living in households surveyed, 27% are children under the age of 18.

SHARE served about 7,100 households each month in FY2000. Total food sales increased from \$2.42 million in FY1999 to \$2.53 million in FY2000. Based on average savings of 40% over grocery store prices, the value of the food purchased was \$3.79 million. The value added to the community through volunteer service was approximately \$1.69 million, bringing the total value of the program in FY2000 to \$5.48 million.

WISCONSIN NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM (WNEP)

The University of Wisconsin-Extension Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) responds to the diverse needs and resources of the poor by implementing community-based nutrition education programs. WNEP began with the introduction of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) to Wisconsin in 1970. EFNEP is funded by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. WNEP has expanded over the past fourteen years with the introduction of the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) to Wisconsin in 1986. FSNEP is a partnership between three agencies: the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) of the State of Wisconsin, and University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX). During fiscal year 2000-2001, WNEP operated as 38 projects in 58 counties of Wisconsin.



WNEP educators made 292,449 FSNEP educational contacts during 2000-2001. Twenty-eight percent of all program participants were families with young children; 44% of the participants were school age youth; 15% were older adults; and 10% were single adults between the ages of 18 and 65 years. Slightly over half of participants were females (61%). Four percent of the individuals taught had a disability.

Persons of many diverse cultural groups were reached by WNEP educators: 74% of participants were Caucasian, 11% African American, 7% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 3% Native American.

During 2000, Food Stamp Program participants in Wisconsin were trained by the Department of Workforce Development on use of the new Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system for food stamps. During the trainings, many WNEP projects conducted a simple survey of participants to assess their needs and interests in nutrition education topics and methods. Over five thousand (5284) food stamp recipients answered some or all of the survey questions asked by the WNEP staff.

Food stamp recipients said they were most interested in learning about topics that would enable them to stretch their available resources to better feed their families: 1929 respondents said they were interested in learning about getting more for their money; 1610 said they wanted to learn about planning low-cost meals; 1288 wanted information about what to do when there is not enough money for food; 1100 were interested in cooking; 1024 wanted to learn more

about shopping for food; and 1022 wanted to know about managing the money they have.

Food stamp recipients expressed interest in learning about several topics that would enable them to improve the quality of their diet and the diets of their children. Of the respondents, 1356 said they were interested in learning about choosing foods for good health and 602 responded that they were interested in learning about feeding children. The results of this needs assessment survey were used throughout the programming year as county and state staff set priorities and made decisions about the direction and emphasis for WNEP educational programs.

WNEP work in the area of food security involves, in part, programs that encourage consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables grown in community gardens. One example is in Oconto, where WNEP was instrumental in helping residents to obtain fresh produce. The project improved vegetable consumption among local food pantry recipients.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Department of Workforce Development, the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX), the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. (GLITC) and the Ho-Chunk Nation have worked cooperatively for the past several years to provide the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) across the state. The 2002 plan calls for the continuation of services for UWEX in 58 counties, for GLITC in six tribes and the Ho-Chunk Nation for services to tribal members in a fifteen county area.

The GLITC is currently in its seventh year of partnering with tribes to carry out Food Stamp Nutrition Education services for all persons residing in the tribal community. Educators in the tribal communities offer nutrition and food budgeting classes and also help to increase food security through community gardening efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2002

The Food Security Consortium, in preparing this annual report, identified the following recommendations for its work in 2002:

1. Complete statewide data analysis on hunger/food insecurity and identify gaps where additional research is needed;
2. Issue the second annual "Status Report on Hunger";
3. Convene a workgroup of individuals to discuss the development of a universal application for state/federal hunger related services;
4. Research the possibility of a statewide recruitment campaign for volunteers for food pantries; and
5. Review existing laws related to food donations and make recommendations for changes where appropriate.

APPENDIX A
(Status Report on Hunger)

APPENDIX B
(Listing of Approved Food Pantry Assistance Grant Projects)